



# MidnightExpress

919th Special Operations Wing

Duke Field, Fla.

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Courtesy photo

## Convoy commandos

Tech. Sgt. James G. Fussell, 919th Logistics Readiness Squadron vehicle operator, drives a gun truck in support of military and civilian convoys in Iraq. In April, Sergeant Fussell and four other 919th Special Operations Wing reservists were assigned to the Army's 1058th Air

Expeditionary Force Truck Company at Forward Operating Base Speicher near Tikrit. Sergeant Fussell went on about 150 convoy missions and drove almost 13,000 miles across Iraq. Threats included rocket-propelled grenades and roadside bombs. Related story is on Pages 6-7.



**Association names Duke reservist woman of the year**

See Page 5



**Munitions NCO catches big fish in national tournament**

See Page 8



**NASCAR shows off at Niceville ESGR breakfast**

See Page 12

# Wing pilots earn Silver Star for gallant mission

By Sandra Henry  
919th SOW Public Affairs

**T**wo wing pilots who dodged Iraqi missiles and other aircraft while refueling special operations helicopters soon will be wearing Silver Stars.

Lt. Col. Bruce R. Taylor, 919th Operations Group, and Maj. Jim Winsmann, 711th Special Operations Squadron, earned the award for their gallantry in the face of extreme danger while supporting a special forces mission April 2, 2003, to infiltrate the Thar Thar Palace in Iraq.

The Thar Thar, one of Saddam Hussein's presidential palaces located near Baghdad, was a suspected site for weapons of mass destruction and a vital intelligence node.

Three MC-130E Combat Talons originally set out on the mission, said Lt. Col. Brett Clark, 919th Operations Group commander. When one developed a fuel leak, two were left to complete the job.

That job was to provide ingress and egress aerial refueling to a special forces helicopter formation infiltrating Navy Sea-Air-Land teams, Army Special Forces and other government agents into the palace during Operation Iraqi Freedom, he said.

"All the missions we've flown in support of OIF were exemplary," said Major Winsmann, pilot for the lead aircraft. "However, what made this mission stand out was that we were going into a known high-threat area where the chance for detection and engagement by the enemy was high. Once into the objective area, we were detected by the enemy and incurred multiple surface-to-air missile engagements."

Major Winsmann, while enduring three separate missile engagements, led the formation



Maj. Jim Winsmann



Lt. Col. Bruce Taylor

## Silver Star

*The Silver Star, established as the Citation Star in 1918, is currently awarded by all branches of the Armed Forces to any person who, while serving in any capacity, is cited for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force, or while serving with friendly forces against an opposing Armed Force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.*

*This medal is a gilt-toned star of five points. On the*

*obverse side in the center is a small silver star, the same size as the original citation star, centered within a wreath of laurel. Eighteen rays radiate from the star to the wreath. The reverse of the star has the inscription, "For Gallantry in Action" in raised letters. A blank area below is suitable for engraving the recipient's name.*

*The ribbon has a wide center stripe of red flanked on either side by a wide stripe of dark blue, a wide stripe of white, a thin stripe of white, and a narrow stripe of dark blue at the edges. (Air Force Personnel Center)*



through six aerial refuelings and successfully passed more than 50,000 pounds of fuel to 10 fuel-critical helicopters, said Colonel Clark.

Colonel Taylor, aircraft commander for the second Talon, said he and his crewmembers knew the risks were going to be extremely high for the mission.

As both aircraft took enemy fire, the crews were intensely engaged in taking evasive actions to avoid being shot down,

he said. However, as one of the missiles approached his aircraft, they were not in a position where they could fully engage in evasive maneuvers.

"We couldn't speed up because there were seven helicopters in front of us; and we couldn't shoot flares because we had helicopters on our hoses refueling, which would have endangered those crews," said Colonel Taylor. "Two of the helicopters detected a missile and

dispensed their flares, and we relied on their flares for our protection while we made a slow descent."

Colonel Taylor and Major Winsmann both say they are honored to receive the award of the Silver Star but give the credit to the crews for their success.

"The success is a result of a crew effort," said Colonel Taylor. "It's an individual award, but one person doesn't plan these missions or fly this airplane. We're very specialized in our crew positions. If everyone doesn't know their job and do it well, we would fail."

In addition to the crew, Major Winsmann recognizes others in the wing for their contributions.

"Without a total team effort from people within our leadership, administration, maintenance, life support and numerous others, crewmembers would not be able to solely focus on flying the mission and the task at hand," he said. "Without that focus, missions like this and others could quickly go awry."

Colonel Clark applauds Colonel Taylor and Major Winsmann and all those on board the Talons.

"A person could fly military missions for a lifetime and never earn such a prestigious award," said Colonel Clark.

"The gallantry of these two men in the face of an extremely dangerous mission is certainly deserving of the Silver Star," he said. "The fact that all crewmembers on both aircraft received awards for heroism, including the Distinguished Flying Cross for several enlisted crewmembers, attests to the challenging nature of the mission."

Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, commander, Air Force Reserve Command, is scheduled to present the Silver Stars Dec. 4 at a wing awards ceremony.

# Commander extends thanks

By Col. Mark Kyle  
919th SOW commander

**N**ovember is a time of year where many of us reflect on our blessings and the contribution of those who sacrificed their lives to preserve the freedoms we have today.

Many of you will spend time at home with friends and family on Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. During these holidays, some of you may bow your heads to give thanks for your families, your jobs, and for those who have served, and currently serve, in the nation's armed forces defending freedom.

Freedom comes with a sacrifice. For reservists, the pursuit of freedom requires time away from families, long hours, or austere working conditions in deployed locations. As reservists we are willing to make these sacrifices because we want to serve and believe in this nation's principles. America is fortunate to have such talented and dedicated men and women serving in the 919th Special Operations Wing. Thank you for your service.

Col. Mark Kyle

919th Special Operations Wing commander

Issues, concerns, and suggestions?

E-mail me at the Commander's Forum at

919sow.cc@eglin.af.mil

## Eliminating UCI Stress: Plan the work, work the plan

Lt. Col. Glenn Davis  
919th Maintenance Group  
commander

**S**tanding up the first active associate wing; Non-stop deployments; "Acing" a Unit Compliance Inspection ... impossible feats? Not for the 919th Special Operations Wing.

In seven months, or 14 Unit Training Assembly days, the 919th SOW will welcome the Head Quarters Air Force Reserve Command Inspector General team to Duke Field for its UCI, Maintenance Standardization and Evaluation Team, and Health Services Inspections.

These events offer the wing an opportunity to demonstrate its compliance with technical directives, command-driven special interest items, and its implementation of Department of Defense-wide management control of high value assets and budgets. The week preceding the June 2005 Unit Training Assembly will certainly be an opportunity to shine.

### Practice like you play

In the upcoming months, Col. Mark Kyle, 919th SOW commander, will launch a plan

### Meet the new MXG commander

**Organization:** 919th MXG  
**Hometown:** Columbia, S.C.  
**Off-duty activities:** Cycling, running  
**Previous assignment:** Commander, 459th Maintenance Group, 459th Air Refueling Wing, Andrews Air Force Base, Md.  
**Organizational goals:** Improve the current active-associate unit concept; give operations the best aircraft possible...on time  
**Work philosophy:** Fix it right the first time.



Lt. Col. T.  
Glenn Davis

to align the wing's processes along the same guidelines that the unit will be measured by the UCI. A dual role Management Control and UCI oversight committee, which will rely heavily on the 919th SOW Self-Inspection Tracking System, will be formed from subject matter experts on the core inspection areas. This group of dedicated folks will be charged with organizing the wing's day-to-day process management so that UCIs of the future will not require major preparation. In essence, "We'll practice like we'll play."

### Progress checks

Along the way, self assessments using the command's Core Inspection Checklists will be completed by all units

and the wing will ensure that a complete cross check of all past 919th SOW write-ups are cleared and that all recent UCI report findings have been addressed locally. A comprehensive intranet Management Control and UCI Preparation site that gives commanders, supervisors, and self-inspection monitors one-stop shopping to find all the key ingredients to running a successful Management Control Program will be established to facilitate and standardize the wing's processes. Several practice exercises will be run via the Exercise Evaluation Team to ensure the unit's emergency response capabilities are ready to meet challenges posed by the IG Team.

### Commanders

Cross-group meetings with all of the squadron and flight commanders will be scheduled to provide an unbiased, second-look at all of the commander programs. Although all these programs are vital, particular interest should be paid to the command special interest items, potential repeat write-ups, operational risk management and safety programs, mentorship, management control, family care, time and attendance, status of resources and training, security, and self inspection.

### Your role

You can make a big difference by paying attention to a few things yourself.

A sharp uniform and haircut always makes a great first impression. Make sure you've done your part on any programs you manage. Ensure write-ups are entered into SITS. Become familiar with the Airman's Manual and the Quick Reaction Guide.

For information, check upcoming editions of the Midnight Express and the UCI local area network site.





Photo by Sandra Henry

## Fitness matters

Master Sgt. Bill Rountree, 919th Services Flight readiness instructor, checks the V-Squat machine upon its arrival and setup at the fitness center here Oct. 14. The machine, which is designed to strengthen the lower body, was one of 22 new machines purchased for the center. The equipment will be available for use as soon as all the modifications have been made to enlarge the fitness center and accommodate the new machines.

# Air Force Reserve Command selects new command chief

By 1st Lt. Lance Patterson  
AFRC Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. - Chief Master Sgt. Jackson A. Winsett will become Air Force Reserve Command's command chief master sergeant later this year, said AFRC officials Sept. 28.

Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of Air Force Reserve and AFRC commander, selected Chief Winsett from among 20 nominees for the position. Air Force reservists from all categories - traditional reservists, individual mobilization augmentees, air reserve technicians and Active Guard Reserve members - applied for the command's top enlisted position.

Chief Winsett has been the command chief for 10th Air Force at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, since May 2000. He will be the fourth command chief that AFRC has had since its inception as a major command in 1997 and the 12th person to hold the job in the Air Force Reserve since March 1973.

The position of AFRC command chief master sergeant is a 3-year controlled tour at Robins AFB. The duties involve communicating with the commander on problems, concerns, morale and attitudes of the enlisted force and, in turn, ensuring the commander's policies are known and understood by the enlisted force.

"My concern is for the enlisted force and the utilization of the force," said Chief



U.S. Air Force photo

**Command Chief Master Sgt. Jackson A. Winsett has been selected as the top enlisted member for Air Force Reserve Command. He will succeed Chief Master Sgt. Cheryl D. Adams, who has served as the AFRC command chief master sergeant since February 2001.**

Winsett. "I anticipate working hard for the next 36 months ensuring the needs of the enlisted corps are met."

Chief Winsett will succeed Chief Master Sgt. Cheryl D. Adams, who has served as the AFRC command chief master sergeant since February 2001. She was the first African-American woman to hold the title of com-

mand chief on active duty for a major command. Chief Adams is being considered for a position within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. If selected she will report for duty in the Pentagon as early as Dec. 1.

Chief Winsett entered the Air Force Reserve in 1981 after serving initially on active duty in the U.S. Army from 1966 to 1969 with tours in Berlin, Germany, and in the Republic of Vietnam.

His duties in the Air Force Reserve included assignments as an administrative specialist, military personnel flight specialist, group career advisor, first-sergeant and command chief master sergeant.

He served as the senior enlisted advisor for the 442nd Fighter Wing at Whiteman AFB, Mo., before becoming the command chief for 10th Air Force.

In his civilian career, Chief Winsett worked for the Federal Deposit Insurance Co. and owned a consulting firm. He retired from both occupations, devoting the last three years to full-time service in the Air Force Reserve.

Chief Winsett has lived in Lexana, Kan., since 1989 where he has been a traditional reservist. He is married and the father of one daughter and two sons.

Chief Winsett holds a bachelor of arts degree in psychology and business and a master of arts degree in business and counseling. (AFRC News Service)

# Duke reservist garners business woman of year award

Story and photo by Jasmine DeNamur  
919th SOW Public Affairs

**E**xcellence in all we do is not only a core value of the Air Force; it is what a 919th Special Operations Wing reservist says she lives by.

Dr. Karyn Combs, or Master Sergeant Combs as she is known here, was selected as the Top Business Woman of 2005 by the American Business Women's Association.

The association recognizes one of its members annually for outstanding career and educational achievements, community involvement and professional development.

"Karyn Combs is a terrific role model, for she inspires other business women by the nature of her own success," said Carolyn Bufton Elman, executive director of the ABWA.

Dr. Combs describes herself as a continuous learner who works hard to perform at the highest levels of excellence, and can remember doing so from the age of 8, teaching children English in Burma, where her parents were missionaries. She has a master's degree in education from California State University, Hayward, Calif., and a



**Dr. Karyn Combs, Duke reservist and principal of Cherokee Elementary School, talks to students at the Eglin Air Force Base school. Dr. Combs was named the 2005 American Business Woman of the Year.**

doctorate in educational leadership from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

She has been the principal of Cherokee Elementary School on Eglin Air Force Base since 1997. Under her leadership, the

school was recognized as an "A +" school in 2000 and 2003, she said.

She strives to enhance the quality of her community, she said, and serves as the Vice-President of the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People for the Okaloosa County Branch. She was also the past president of the Fort Walton Beach Chapter of the ABWA.

To further educate the public on the contributions of African Americans, Dr. Combs is working on a book with her father titled, "An African American Quiz Book for All Americans." This book will include the biographies of past and present African Americans who aren't well known to the public.

She also applies her teaching skills in the Air Force Reserve. As the 919th Special Operations Wing Military Equal Opportunity superintendent, she teaches human relations and equal opportunity courses to reservists, she said.

"I hope I can inspire Air Force reservists to aim for excellence in all they do and teach them that Air Force core values are what we need to follow in order to become role models for reservists to come."

## Wing recruiters set up shop at annual Boggy Bayou festival

Story and photo by  
Airman 1st Class Amy Richards  
919th SOW Public Affairs

**C**hildren and adults alike filled up their bags with all kinds of goodies, including plastic cups, key chains, pens and clips.

Some came to look, others to chat, others simply to have fun at a booth that did not charge money. Later, people lined up to receive autographs from Restless Heart, a well-known country band now touring with the Air Force Reserve.

The four 919th Special Operations Wing recruiters who attended the Niceville Mullet Festival Oct. 16-17 not only gave out information and gifts to the community, but held the

post-concert autograph session for the band at the booth they set up near the stage.

"It is important for people to know that a band like Restless Heart supports what we do," said Master Sgt. Jim Inskipt, the wing's in-service recruiter at Eglin Air Force Base. "We can't pay for advertising like that."

Tech. Sgt. Joe Legrone, Pensacola recruiter for the wing; Tech. Sgt. Adam Waldie, the wing's Fort Walton recruiter; and Senior Master Sgt. Lane Whitlow, senior wing recruiter, joined Sergeant Inskipt in promoting the 919th SOW and the Air Force Reserve to various individuals who came by the booth.



**(Right to left) Tech. Sgt. Adam Waldie, Master Sgt. Jim Inskipt, and Tech. Sgt. Joe Legrone, wing recruiters, talk to potential recruits Oct. 17 at the booth they set up at the Mullet Festival.**

"We're planting seeds," said Sergeant Whitlow. "We want to promote community awareness and let people know we're here."

"We want people to know that we're just as much a part of them as everyone else," said

Sergeant Inskipt. "We are showing people that they have the ability to serve but yet still do it from home; that they can be a part of something bigger and still be a part of the community."





Photo by Tech. S.

A gun truck from an air expeditionary force transportation company leads a convoy on the main supply route from Baghdad to Tikrit. The company's Airmen provide security to military and civilian convoys as they move supplies to multiple forward-deployed locations throughout Iraq.

(Right) Col. Mark Kyle, 919th Special Operations Wing commander, welcomes home Master Sgt. Linnell L. Johnson, who served seven months in Iraq supporting convoys, at the Okaloosa Regional Airport in Fort Walton Beach. Sergeant Johnson, Tech. Sgt. James G. Fussell, Tech. Sgt. Brian S. Solger, Staff Sgt. Paul Williamson, and Senior Airman Phillip Bahm, Jr., with the 919th Logistics Readiness Squadron, were among hundreds of vehicle operators from transportation units throughout the Air Force, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard who provided gun truck support for military and civilian convoys.



Photo by 2nd Lt. Marr

# Convoy Commandos

## Duke Field's vehicle operators return from convoy duty in Iraq

By 2nd Lt. Marnee A. Carlson  
919th SOW Public Affairs

**F**ive 919th Special Operations Wing Airmen received a warm welcome by loved ones and fellow unit members in late September after returning home from a seven-month deployment supporting convoys in Iraq.

Master Sgt. Linnell L. Johnson, Tech. Sgt. James G. Fussell, Tech. Sgt. Brian S. Solger, Staff Sgt. Paul Williamson, and Senior Airman Phillip Bahm, Jr., with the 919th Logistics Readiness Squadron here, were among hundreds of vehicle operators from transportation units throughout the Air Force, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard who provided gun truck support for military and civilian convoys.

Providing security escort for convoys is one of the Army's missions; however, when the demand for this service exceeded their capability, the Air Force offered to help early this year. The Airmen provided support for convoys moving food, water, fuel, ammunition and other vital supplies to forward operating bases throughout Iraq, said Sergeant Fussell.

The 919th SOW reservists' venture began in February. They deployed to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., for a week of vehicle training and then to Kuwait for six weeks of tactical and convoy live-fire training. In April, the reservists were assigned to the Army's 1058th Air Expeditionary Force Truck Company at Forward Operating Base Speicher near Tikrit. The 1058th is one of three Air Force gun truck units in Tikrit, Balad, and Mosul.

It was a rough deployment filled with many dangers, said Sergeant Fussell who served as a gun truck operator and heavy gunner. The 15-year veteran, as well as Sergeants Solger and Williamson and Airman Bahm, went on about 150 convoy

missions and drove almost 13,000 miles across Iraq. As heavy gunners, Airmen man a .50-caliber machine gun while standing in the back of an armor-plated 5-ton gun truck and scan the area for possible attackers.

Some of the threats the Airmen encountered were small arms fire, rocket-propelled grenades and roadside bombs. Sergeant Fussell said the convoys came under fire about four times a week.

"It is the real deal over there," said Sergeant Fussell who, like all Airmen serving on the convoys, now wears the Army's coveted green and red 1st Infantry Division combat patch on his uniform. "Our job was to get the convoy out of the kill zone, provide the Army's Quick Response Forces with the coordinates of the attackers, and then get the convoy to the forward operating base safely."

The most difficult aspect of the deployment wasn't putting up with the field conditions, 120-degree weather and 18-plus-hour days, but was making sure everyone on the

convoy returned safely, said Sergeant Johnson. The 30-year veteran received a bronze star for meritorious service as a convoy commander. The

other 919th reservists earned Army commendation medals. Sergeant Johnson and his convoy drivers traveled more than 10,000 miles to deliver more than 2 million gallons of water to 16 on-post locations and three off-post locations, one of which was 90 miles off the post.

"We never knew what to expect," he said. "Once you go out the gate, you

have to always stay vigilant. You don't want to let your guard down because the enemy can come out of nowhere."

Although challenging, Sergeant Fussell said that he saw more "good" than "bad" in Iraq. He said it also gave him a greater appreciation for being American.

"Saddam Hussein lived like a king while the rest of his countrymen were living in mud huts and shacks," he said. "Our efforts are making things better for the Iraqis. They are getting power, sewage and water in places where they never had it before. Seeing how those people lived gave me an appreciation for what we have here in America."

Sergeant Johnson said he didn't realize how worthwhile the experience was until he came home.

"When I got off that plane, saw my wife, my 16-month old son, my new wing commander who I had never met, and all my friends and co-workers, I felt so appreciated," he said. "I couldn't stop

shaking hands with these people who had taken time to come and show us their support. It was an experience I will never forget. It was at that

point I realized it was well worth it."

Lt. Col. Theresa M. Vannier, 919th LRS commander, said she is happy to have her unit members back safe and sound.

"They were asked to do a tough job, and they did it well," she said. "I'm proud of them, and I'm happy to see them back home with their families where they belong."

**“ We never knew what to expect. Once you go out the gate, you have to always stay vigilant. ”**

— Master. Sgt. Linnell L. Johnson  
919th Logistics Readiness Squadron  
vehicle operator

Sgt. Scott Reed

ee A. Carlson



## Catfish takes the bait:

## Duke Airman places at national tournament

By Sandra Henry  
919th SOW Public Affairs

**J**ames L. Green, a munitions NCO here, loves to eat catfish; but, the one he is most proud of catching, he won't be eating.

Green finished second in the Big Fish Category at the catch and release 2004 National Championship Catfish Tournament at Randolph's Landing, Manning, S.C., Sept. 25-26.

Until the last few minutes of the tournament, Green said he thought he would walk away with \$3,500 and first place for the biggest fish. According to the tournament Web site, Green's catfish weighed in at 54.3 pounds. As the tournament was just about to close, another fisherman showed up with a 58-pounder, and Green and his fishing partner, Jason Murphy, had to settle for \$700 and second place among the 98 teams in the tournament.

Green used live gizzard shad for bait and said he wasn't expecting such a big fish when he set the hook. After seeing a slight bounce on the end of his pole, the fight began.

"It was 15 minutes of gear cranking, line stripping, drag busting, stump running, adrenaline packed fun," he said.

Murphy, boat owner and childhood friend, netted the fish and helped bring it into the boat. Green said he recalls Murphy saying, "I just ripped my brand new boat seat, but I don't care. That is the biggest fish I've ever seen."

Green and Murphy also won \$300 for fourth place in the total weight category for the five biggest fish caught. They were 54.3 pounds, 30.8 pounds, and three 21-pounders for a total weight of 148.1 pounds. Although Arkansas



Courtesy photo

**(Left) James L. Green, munitions NCO at the 716th Maintenance Squadron here, and partner, Jason Murphy, show off the 54.3-pound catfish that earned Green second place in the 2004 National Championship Catfish Tournament at Randolph's Landing, Manning, South Carolina, Sept. 25-26. Murphy, Green's partner, is owner of a concrete company based in South Carolina.**

Blue and Flathead catfish both reside at the Santee Cooper Reservoir where they fished, their winning fish were all Flatheads. They caught over 290 pounds of catfish over the 30-hour tournament period,

said Green.

Green, an Alabama native, has fished since the age of 4 and has learned a lot about catching Flatheads.

"Get 'em off the bottom within a few seconds or hang it

up," he said. "Once hooked, Flatheads love to run to the stumps. They will wrap a line around an 8-foot oak stump and never look back. Don't bring a wimpy line to a Flat-head fight."

Green has fished in about a dozen catfish tournaments and multitudes of other tournaments, especially for bass, he said. His plans are to fish full-time after military retirement.

Green is assigned to the 716th Maintenance Squadron, a 16th Special Operations Wing active-duty unit that supports maintenance operations at the Air Force Reserve's 919th Special Operations Wing. The 16th SOW is headquartered at nearby Hurlburt Field.

"Sergeant Green is passionate about fishing," said Chief Master Sgt. Paul Albini, 919th Maintenance Squadron munitions supervisor. "Whenever he goes on a tournament, we know about it. It's a hobby that helps him enjoy his free time and reduce stress."

But free time isn't something Sergeant Green has had much of, said Chief Albini. He's been deployed about 18 months in the last three years.

Even though he spends a lot of time deployed and military retirement is at least 8 years away, Green still has big plans for the next few years with his fishing partner.

Those plans include organizing a catfish tournament trail in Florida, winning the South Carolina State Catfish Tournament, the National Catfish Tournament, and the Cabela's King Kat Classic in 2005.

"Look for us in a fishing magazine in the very near future," he said with a smile.



# Nov. 11 time to honor veterans

In 1921, an unknown World War I American soldier was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. This site, on a hillside overlooking the Potomac River and Washington, D.C., became the focal point of reverence for America's veterans.

Similar ceremonies occurred earlier in England and France, where an unknown soldier was buried in each nation's highest place of honor. These memorials took place on Nov. 11, giving universal recognition to the celebrated ending of World War I fighting at 11 a.m., Nov. 11, 1918 (the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month). The day became known as "Armistice Day."

Armistice Day received its name in America in 1926 through a Congressional resolution. It became a national holiday 12 years later. If the idealistic hope had been realized that World War I was "the War to end all wars," Nov. 11 might still be called Armistice Day. But only a few years after the holiday was proclaimed, war broke out in Europe. Sixteen and one half million Americans served in World War II; 407,000 of them died in service.

The first celebration using the term Veterans Day occurred in Birmingham, Ala., in 1947. Raymond Weeks, a World War II veteran, organized "National Veterans Day," which included a parade and other festivities, to honor all veterans. The event was held on Nov. 11, Armistice Day. Later, U.S. Representative Edward Rees of Kansas proposed a bill that would change Armistice Day to Veterans Day. In 1954, Congress passed the bill that President Eisenhower signed proclaiming Nov. 11 as Veterans Day. (Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs)



Photo by Sandra Henry

## Sharp Troop

**Airman Shawana D. McAfee, 919th Mission Support Flight customer service representative, shows a customer how to complete a vehicle registration form. Airman McAfee, this month's Sharp Troop, has been assigned to the unit since March.**

## NEWCOMERS

The 919th Special Operations Wing welcomes the following new members.

### 8th Special Operations Squadron

Staff Sgt. Gregory Hicks

### 716th Maintenance Squadron

Staff Sgt. Michael Page

Senior Airman Thomas J. Cobos

Airman 1st Class Raul Aragon

Airman 1st Class Ashley Weber

Airman 1st Class Bennett Wicker

### 8th Special Operations Squadron

Maj. Michael J. Lee

Master Sgt. Thomas B. Mazzone

### 716th Maintenance Squadron

Tech. Sgt. Jonathon Ezell

Senior Airman Jeremias Cirilo

Senior Airman Wesley Huffman

Senior Airman Lindsay Robinson

### 719th Communications Flight

Master Sgt. Paul M. Bouton

Tech. Sgt. Joseph A. Skrabacz

### 919th Medical Squadron

Staff Sgt. Dale K. Hardin

## PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to the following members promoted to the rank indicated via the Promotion Enhancement Program:

### 711th Special Operations Squadron

Senior Master Sgt. Thomas A. Mason

### 919th Maintenance Squadron

Chief Master Sgt. Paul Albini

Master Sgt. Steven A. Bicknell

Tech. Sgt. Duane E. Vanvrancen

### 919th Logistics Readiness Squadron

Tech. Sgt. Alexander A. Kameenui

Congratulations to the following people promoted to the rank indicated:

### 919th Military Operations Flight

Airman 1st Class Emily J. Bush

Congratulations to the following members who graduated this fall from the Community College of the Air Force:

### 5th Special Operations Squadron

Master Sgt. Edward B. Borden

### 711th Special Operations Squadron

Master Sgt. Thomas W. Dejan

### 919th Operations Support Squadron

Staff Sgt. Donald A. Anderson

### 719th Maintenance Squadron

Master Sgt. Cassandra L. Arthur

Staff Sgt. Robert L. Breitenstein

Staff Sgt. Keith D. Wigley

### 919th Maintenance Squadron

Staff Sgt. George R. Blackman

### 919th Logistics Readiness Squadron

Tech. Sgt. Charles J. Larouche

Staff Sgt. Nolan M. Sylvester

## KUDOS

## RETIREMENTS

Congratulations to **Dr. (Col.) Frank Farmer**, 919th Medical Squadron commander, who is retiring from the Air Force Reserve.

Dr. Farmer joined the 919th Special Operations Wing in 1996 and served as the 5th Special Operations Squadron flight surgeon before serving in his current position. He took command of the 919th MDS in August 2001, just in time for the huge medical work load that resulted from the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and wing activations.

Dr. Farmer plans to continue his active role in the medical community. He was appointed to the Florida Medical Board by Gov. Jeb Bush.

A retirement ceremony and change of command are scheduled for 3 p.m. Nov. 6 at the base theater. All personnel are invited. A reception will follow at the medical squadron.

## STREET BEAT: As we celebrate Thanksgiving this month, what are you most thankful for?

*"I'm thankful to have a roof over my head, and one that doesn't have a blue tarp on it."*

**Lt. Col. Bob Ennis**  
5th Special Operations Squadron  
navigator



*"I live near Panama City, and I'm thankful that nothing bad happened to my family and friends during Hurricane Ivan."*

**Tech. Sgt. Dennis Parrish**  
919th Maintenance Squadron  
Dash-21 technician



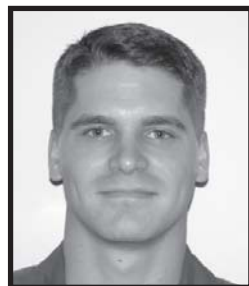
*"I'm thankful for my ISO crew and my supervisor because we work so well together and produce an outstanding product."*

**Staff Sgt. Kathleen Dominick**  
919th Maintenance Squadron  
engine mechanic



*"I'm thankful to be able to spend the extra time with my family and friends."*

**Staff Sgt. Kris Williams**  
5th Special Operations Squadron  
loadmaster



*"I am thankful to live in such a great country, for my family, and the great people I work with."*

**Ruth Hughes**  
919th Special Operations Wing  
chief, military pay



## Memo backs up USERRA

Attorney General John Ashcroft and Labor Secretary Elaine L. Chao signed a memorandum of understanding in September to protect the employment rights of men and women returning from military service. The memorandum strengthens enforcement of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994, commonly known as USERRA. Congress passed the act to safeguard the employment rights and benefits of service members returning to civilian life.

## FEHB open season begins

The Federal Employees Health Benefits open season begins Nov. 8 and runs through Dec. 13. The Office of Personnel Management is no longer printing and distributing FEHB guides. They expect to have the guides and individual plan brochures available on their Web site at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/index.asp> by the time the open season begins. Additional information on FEHB and the open season is available on the BEST homepage under "health insurance." The BEST homepage is located at [www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/best/menu.htm](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/best/menu.htm).

## Unit seeks first sergeant

The 307<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, Langley Air Force Base, Va., is accepting applications for a first sergeant in the grade of E-7. The vacancy is a traditional reservist position and requires frequent travel. Specific standards, duties, and responsibilities are in Air Force Instruction 36-2113. Interested individuals may call Senior Master Sgt. Scott Fletcher at DSN 575-8773, commercial (757) 225-8773, or e-mail [307fs@langley.af.mil](mailto:307fs@langley.af.mil) to inquire about application procedures.

## C-141 schoolhouse closes

Air Force Reserve Command shut down its C-141 schoolhouse at Wright-Patterson Air Force

Base, Ohio, Oct. 14. A ceremony marked the closing of the school, officially called the C-141 Formal Training Unit managed by the 445th Airlift Wing. Use of the facility, the only one of its kind in the Air Force, ended because all C-141s will retire by 2006. The school opened in January 2002 for C-141 pilots, loadmasters and flight engineers. The Air Force moved the school from Altus AFB, Okla., to Wright-Patterson in 2001. Although the school closed, the Reserve unit will continue to run a flight simulator for training.

## Air Force launches user-friendly news product

Air Force officials announced a new e-mail service Oct. 20 that gives subscribers a user-friendly news summary with links to extensive news and information, as well as audio and video news reports.

Those wishing to receive the free e-mail news summary, called "AF Today," can subscribe by going to Air Force Link at [www.af.mil](http://www.af.mil) and clicking on "Subscribe" on the right side of the site's banner.

Air Force News Service now offers 22 e-mail subscription services free of charge. They range from the weekday Air Force Print News and monthly Airman magazine to news from Air Force major commands.

## AFRC's Citizen Airman gets new Web address

The official magazine of the Air Force Reserve is getting a new Web address. Citizen Airman's new address is: [www.afrc.af.mil/news/citizenairman/index.htm](http://www.afrc.af.mil/news/citizenairman/index.htm).

In addition to moving to a new Web home, Citizen Airman, published for more than 76,000 reservists across the globe, is getting a new look. The changes, which took effect with the publication of the October issue of the magazine, were made to bring more continuity to Air Force Reserve Command's presentation of official news and information on the Web.



## November UTA paydays

The payday for the November unit training assembly will be Nov. 15 if the UTA pay system data is turned into the wing finance office before 8:30 a.m. the day after the UTA. If the data is received after 8:30 a.m., the pay date will be Nov. 19.

## MPF moves newcomers briefings

The November newcomers briefings will take place in the Building 3002 Conference Room. All briefers need to report at their regularly scheduled times. Sponsors will pick up newcomers at Building 3002. The 919th Military Personnel Flight Customer Service office will be closed Saturday due to the large volume of newcomers. Hours for Sunday are 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

## Top 3 schedules speaker, movie

Myron Webb, 919th Mission Support Group Lodging Manager, is the scheduled

speaker for the Top 3 meeting 11:30 a.m. Saturday at the Duke Field Theater. He will discuss the reservation process for unit training assemblies. All Top 3 personnel are encouraged to attend.

The Top 3 will also host "Saturday Night at the Movies," for all wing members. The free show will begin at 6 p.m. at the Duke Field Theater. The movie, "Walking Tall," stars Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson. It is rated PG-13.

## Commander names bonus AFSCs

The following 919th Special Operations Wing positions are designated as bonus Air Force Specialty Codes for enlistments and reenlistments for the period Oct. 1 through March 31, 2005:

Flight engineer (1A1X1), loadmaster (1A2X1), radio operator (1A3X1), communications navigation (2A5X3A), guidance and control (2A5X3B), electronic warfare (2A5X3C), aircraft fuel systems (2A6X4), air-

craft hydraulic systems (2A6X5), aircraft electrical and environmental systems (2A6X6), structural (3E3X1), and security forces (3P0X1). Some restrictions apply. For additional information, contact Master Sgt. Ann Jones, the wing career advisor, at 883-6134.

## November UTA Lunch Menu

**Saturday** – Shrimp cocktail, steamship round beef, roast turkey, baked ham, glazed sweet potatoes, cornbread dressing, green beans with mushrooms, steamed corn, and french onion soup. Due to the holiday meal, there will be no snack line.

**Sunday** – Sauerbraten, chicken breast Parmesan, roast loin of pork, steamed rice, au gratin potatoes, peas, cauliflower combo, cream gravy, and cream of broccoli soup

## UTA Highlights

Newcomers need to report to the Building 3002 Conference Room for inprocessing.

The unit training assembly schedule for fiscal 2005 is **Nov. 6-7, Dec. 4-5, Jan. 8-9, Feb. 5-6, March 5-6, April 2-3, May 14-15, June 4-5, July 9-10, Aug. 6-7 and Sept. 10-11.**

Time	Activity	Location	Point of Contact
<b>Saturday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.</b>			
7:30 to 11 a.m.	Immunizations (Yellow Fever 9 to 10 a.m.)	Building 3120	Capt. Dale Holt, 883-6377
8 a.m. to 3 p.m.	NBCDT Refresher	Building 3025	Senior Master Sgt. Chris McKinley, 883-6484
8:30 to 10:30 a.m.	CCAF/GI Bill Counseling	Building 3002, Room 146	Master Sgt. Ron Dougherty, 883-6638
8:30 a.m.	Chief's Meeting with wing commander	Building 3077, CC Conf. Room	Chief Master Sgt. Matt Schmitt, 883-6331
9 a.m.	Unit Deployment Manager Meeting	Building 3077, Room 5	Senior Master Sgt. Skinner, 883-6053
9 to 11 a.m.	Inspector General	Building 3021, Suite 1	Lt. Col. Michael Thornal, 883-6571
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.	Flu shot immunizations	Duke Theater	Tech. Sgt. Tanya Breed, 883-6377
9:30 a.m.	First Sergeants Meeting with wing commander	Building 3077, CC Conf. Room	Chief Schmitt
11:30 a.m.	Top 3 Meeting	Duke Theater	Senior Master Sgt. Scott Eck, 883-6723
12:30 p.m.	Sponsors pick up newcomers	Building 3002, Conf. Room	Tech. Sgt. Sybil McDowell, 883-6458
1:30 to 2:15 p.m.	Full Spectrum Threat Response Training	Building 3025	Sergeant McKinley
3 p.m.	919th MDS Change of Command/Retirement	Duke Theater	Capt. Jason Haynes, 883-6768
<b>Sunday, 7 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.</b>			
7:15 a.m.	Catholic Service	Building 3002, Room 155	Chaplain, 883-6232
7:15 a.m. to noon	Military Equal Opportunity Training	Building 3077, Room 209	Maj. Grisel DeLeon 883-6718
7:30 to 8:30 a.m.	Anthrax Immunizations	Clinic	Tech. Sgt. Joseph Lofria, 883-6377
8 a.m.	Protestant Service	Building 3002, Room 155	Chaplain
8 a.m.	End-of-Course Testing	Building 3002, Room 108	Sergeant Dougherty
8 a.m.	Drug Testing	Building 3054 (Old Club)	Tech. Sgt. Willie Johnson, 883-6377
8 a.m. to noon	NBCDT Refresher	Building 3025	Sergeant McKinley
8 a.m. to noon	Passports and Photos	Building 3077, Room 205	Master Sgt. Greg Paci, 883-6442
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.	Flu shot immunizations	Duke Theater	Sergeant Breed
1 to 2 p.m.	Exercise Evaluation Team Training	Building 3025	Sergeant McKinley
1 to 3:45 p.m.	Supervisor Safety Training	Building 3077, Room 209	Sergeant Eck
2 p.m.	Awards and Promotion Ceremony	Duke Theater	Capt. Haynes

# Niceville salutes local employers

By Maj. Beena Maharaj  
919th SOW Public Affairs

**P**artnering with the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve committee, the Niceville-Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce hosted a "Support our Troops" event at the Niceville Community Center Oct. 8.

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Thomas F. Hall spoke to an audience of 200 employers, civic leaders, active-duty personnel, and guardsmen and reservists during the breakfast.

"There are more than 1 million citizen soldiers in the military," said Mr. Hall. "Approximately 35 percent of them are now active duty."

Mr. Hall praised companies for backing workers mobilized to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, or in support of homeland defense.

"This was a great opportunity to salute local employers who have demonstrated 'Above and Beyond' support for their employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve," said Col. Mark Kyle, 919th Special Operations Wing commander.

Okaloosa Walton College was one of five area employers recognized with certificates during the event.

"The support I received from my employer during activation was tremendous," said Senior Master Sgt. Ed Livingston, 919th Operations Support Flight first sergeant and 30-year OWC employee.



Photo by William VanderMate

**Servicemembers, local employers and other community supporters sign a banner to thank mobilized members of the Guard and Reserve at a breakfast in Niceville Oct. 8.**

"I was in the midst of several projects, so we had to keep lines of communication open. I was a viable part of the team, even though I wasn't physically at work," he said.

"Due to construction issues, I had to look for a temporary home and my supervisor gave me the key to a vacant home in Crestview. They have supported me on various levels, and they are truly deserving of the recognition."

At the end of the event, all attendees were invited to sign their names on a 40-foot Support our Troops banner.

"It was an honor to sign the banner," said Christina Ruckel, Ruckel Properties sales director. "The goal is to collect a mil-

lion signatures and send it to Afghanistan."

Ms. Ruckel, who spearheaded the event, learned about ESGR during her tenure as an honorary commander here and joined the ESGR committee.

On display at the event was "America's Car," a NASCAR show car to salute America's supportive employers of National Guardsmen and reservists. Participating in five NASCAR Busch Series events, ESGR Number 29 car is painted in a rotating scheme to represent all components of the National Guard and Reserve.

Many employers got in the racing spirit and jumped in the driver's seat to get a feel of life in the fast lane.

## Midnight Express

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